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Due Frequency
OF THE
LORD'S SUPPER:
Stated and Proved
FROM
HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Agreeably to the *Rubricks* of our
Church-Liturgy.

Being an *Answer* to that *Question*, *How*
often a Good Christian ought to come
to the Holy Communion?

Together with a *Method* of *Preparati-*
on for *Weekly Communicating*.

By the Right Reverend Father in God, Edward
Wetenhall, D.D. Lord Bishop of Kilmore
and Ardagh in the Kingdom of Ireland.

L O N D O N:
Printed for Benj. Tooke, at the Middle-
Temple-Gate in Fleetstreet. 1703.

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THE
OF THE
LORDS SUPRE
SACRED AND
FROM
HOLY SCRIPTURES

Agreeably to the Rubrick of our
Church of England

Being an Oath
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to the H

LONDON
Printed for Benj. Tooke at the
Temple-Gate in Fleet-Street

T O

Her Most Sacred Majesty

A N N E,

QUEEN

O F

*Great-Brittain, France and Ireland,**Defender of the Faith, &c.**May it please Your Majesty,*

THE private Concerns of
 my own Family, calling
 me into this my Native
 Country, and keeping me some
 while here; I have according to

(a 3)

my

my Duty, wherever I am, studi-
 ed, during my stay, to do what I
 I could, in my way, for promoting
 ting serious Christianity accord-
 ding to the Excellent Orders
 and Laws of Our Church for
 Amongst which, as there is none
 perhaps more Excellent and shi-
 Truly Christian, than those De-
 touching the Lord's Supper
 so it is hard to assign any more
 neglected than the Rubrick
 which enjoyn Due Frequency
 of it: And the neglect is not on-
 ly in Country-Parishes, but
 even in some greater Church-
 es.

I have long observed and tax-
 romed this ; but being able, out of
 my own Diocese, to do little,
 have what I do from the PRESS,
 for remedying so great an Evil,
 therefore resolved on the Pub-
 lishing this small Treatise, and
 Dedication it to Your MAJE-
 STY: That the Regard all
 Your Subjects bear to Your MA-
 JESTIES NAME, might
 gain it more Readers, and so
 render it more useful.

I had indeed the happiness
 some Years ago to deliver a great
 part of what I here Publish, un-
 der

(a 4)

der

der a little other form in Your
 MAJESTIES Hearing
 For which reason I thought
 (however mean, yet) after
 sort Your MAJESTIES Pro-
 perty; and for that Cause all
 gave it not a meaner Dedicati-
 on.

In the place where I then ap-
 peared, I confess my
 Spirit was moved in
 me, when I saw so No-
 ble, so Vast, and so Devout
 Congregation there assembling,
 not only twice every Lord's
 Day, but a very great part of
 them every day in the Week,

Tunbridg-
 Wells
 Chappel.
 A.D. 1697.

yet

You yet kept without the advantage
 of one Publick Communion
 the whole Summer long; and
 one great part of the Parochi-
 al Inhabitants not only the
 whole year, but year after year.
 My particular design (which
 perhaps some judged too bold,
 but whereof I neither yet do,
 nor ever shall repent) was to
 have there redressed that fore-
 Evil: But the Design did not
 then take. I am sure the Rea-
 son was not, because the Fre-
 quency I here plead for was not
 the Primitive Practice, or not
 required by Our Church, (both
 which I pretended there, and do

now here pretend, to have made
 out) but it was said, that though
 the place wherein we assembled
 was decently (and even august-
 ly) furnished for the Celebra-
 tion of this Holy Office, yet
 it was not Consecrated, nor
 might be Consecrated for want
 of a fixed endowment ; that there
 was difficulty of fixing any, with
 like plea's. These however real
 inconveniences, yet as it is hoped
 they are now in a great mea-
 sure remedied in that place, so
 were they not, can no wise be
 put in the Ballance with leav-
 ing so great a multitude, and not
 a few of them Valetudinary
 Per-

made Persons, so long destitute of the
 great Seal of their Salvati-
 on.

This were easy to be proved,
 did it need a proof.

But instead thereof I hum-
 bly lay this Discourse for the Ce-
 lebrating the Lord's Supper, at
 least every Lord's Day, toge-
 ther with a short Office for the
 securing True Devotion in
 such Frequency, at Your MA-
 JESTIES Feet ; beseech-
 ing the Almighty God to Multi-
 ply as well Your MAJESTIES
 Daies as Your Glories ; that

as he has made Your **MAJESTY** a true Defender of the Faith, once delivered to the Saints, so You may long live the Supporter of all Primitive Order in his Worship: till this small part of his Church here on Earth, being perfectly establish'd by Your Wise, and Steady Conduct You may be late received in to that other, which is the only one, in all Points, better Constituted, the General Assembly, and Church of the First-born in Heaven.

Such

Such as these are every
day, and many times in each,
the Ardent Prayers of,

May it please Your Majesty,

Your Majesties

Most Dutiful

And Humbly

Obedient Subject

Edw. Killmore and Ardagh.

To

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TO THE
READERS,

Especially those of the
REVEREND and VENERABLE
English Clergy.

I Think my Self bound,
wherever I come, to promote as far as I am able, that *Gratitude* and *Zeal of Love*, which all Christian Souls owe to their *Dying Lord*; who Redeemed them with his own Blood, Shed under all the Circumstances of *Shame* and *Pain* for us. And there cannot certainly be found any properer way of Expressing
such

To the Readers, &c.

such Affection, nor indeed
more natural means to raise
it, than that which Himself
has Instituted: A Regular
Frequency of shewing forth
Death till he come. This as
makes me a Guest at the
Lord's Table, in many Parish
Churches where I am a Stran-
ger, because possibly in the
Parish, where I Lodge and
am known, there is not more
vers Sundays a Communion: Than
it amongst other Motives has
induced me to Publish this
short Discourse; that if
were possible, I might be called
at no time into any Parish,
on the Lord's Day; where
might not meet with the
Lord's Supper.

¶ To the Readers, &c.

And I think it a very considerable Argument for the removing all such, who would approve themselves Faithful Stewards of Christ's Holy My-
steries, frequently to administer this to their People; Strive, namely, that There is no part of the Christian Worship, in which all sort of Protestants are more serious and generally devout than in the Holy Communion. Herein none of them prate, whisper their Neighbours, laugh, or ordinarily so much gaze about them; but all are intent on God and their Duty: As therefore Acts produce Habits, so the oftner Our People can be brought to the Communion, the more

To the Readers, &c.

more of Seriousness, as to Religion, (it is to be hoped may be wrought in them. And I have not only been told by divers Grave and Discreet Ministers, but found it by my own experience, that the more frequently the *Communion* is administered, the more do *Communicants* grow upon us.

Wherefore I hope I shall not be by any censured, that in this small Piece I do *ἄλλοτε περισσῶς*, or stretch myself beyond the measure of the Rule God hath distributed to me. I will only say, it was not my intention; and I trust there is nothing herein, which can be reasonably so interpreted.

I pray

To the Readers, &c.

I pray God, we may all
us take heed to our selves, and
all the flock over which the Ho-
ghost has made us Overseers,
feed the Church of God, which
hath purchased with his own
Blood : And that our Lord
when he comes may find each of
us so doing.

London,

Apr. 10.

1703.

THE

of the Readers, &c.
I pray God, we may all
be able to do our duty
in the face of our
God, and make us
the Church of God, which
is purchased with his
blood: And that our Lord
will come in judgment
and bring down
the wicked.

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THE
CONTENTS
OF THE
Several SECTIONS.

1. **N**eglect of Commu-
nicating, one Pro-
duct of the Disputes about
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A Postscript.

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Due Frequency

OF THE

LORD's SUPPER:

Stated and Proved

FROM

HOLY SCRIPTURE.

1. **I**T is most unhappily so come to pass, partly *Neglect of communicating a Product of Disputes about this Sacrament.* through the Corruption of Human Nature, partly through the Indefatigable Malice of that *Enemy*, who from the beginning has watched *sow Tares in the Field* where God *sowed*

sowed good Seed; that that very Institution, which our Lord designed for the strictest Outward Bond of Christian Union, is become the great Apple of Contention in the Church of God: And there are, I think, *more Controversies* risen, touching this single Head of the *Lord's Supper*, than on any other one Common Place in the whole Body of Divinity. Of which Controversies one deplorable Effect (at least Event Concomitant) is very remarkable that still, the more the Christian World fell into Disputes touching the Matter, Form, Benefits and diverse Circumstances of this Sacrament, the less they frequented its Participation; and as their Wrangling Heats increased, so did their Neglects and the Lukewarmness of their Devotion: Until it came to be resolv'd by the Doctors of a certain Church, that to be Spectators of the Celebration, or to have some delight to speak, *to assist at Mass*, is better and safer for the

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S. 2.
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people, than frequently to Receive:
All this is for a Lamentation, and
ought to be for a Lamentation.

But God be thanked, the main
Body of the Duty it self, that we
ought to do this in Remembrance
of our Lord, is out of Question
amongst all, who may be called
Christians. I shall therefore at
present industriously be silent
touching the vast number of the
Controversies suggested, and speak
here only to this Single *Practical*
Question or Case of Conscience;
How often ought every Christian to
Communicate, who would enter in
at the Strait-Gate: I mean (in
Common Language) who would
walk strictly with God, and live
up to the Christian Rules that are
safest.

S. 2. This Question is of con- The Case
siderable Moment, and the rather, of Due
for that the practice not only of Frequency
private Christians, however De- of great
vout, but even of whole Churches, Moment.

as to frequency of communicating, has now a long time been, and is, *very various*; Many private Persons (of *latter years* especially) Communicating *once a Month*, others scarce once in *three Months*: our Church Liturgy also tacitly conniveing at the generality of her People, if *three times in the Year* they Communicate: yet withall it being sure, that of old, in the Primitive Church, most or all adult Christians did, and some amongst us (according to another Rubrick) at present do, Communicate *ordinarily every Lords Day*, if not *oftner on special occasion* Presenting. Now upon so great, and as it would seem not Rash, Humoursome or fortuitous variety of Practice, it may justly be made a Question, or any plain Christian may reasonably doubt, *what Course is best*? Or *how often must they Communicate*, who would in some sort live up to the Primitive genuine Christianity?

*The safest
Resolution
from Scrip-
ture.*

§. 3. For resolving this Question, although the constant or continued Practice of the Church (universally) might prove of great force, to satisfy the Consciences of many (of which I may speak in another part) yet for the present we will suppose, the *Rules* which are *safest* ought to be taken from the *express word of God*, (that is from some Text or Texts of Holy Scripture) and that the Holy Scripture alone gives us the true standard and measure of primitive and genuine Christianity: That therefore every Conscientious Christian, as in other things, so particularly in the case of frequenting the Lords table, should strictly regulate his Practice according to the written Word. In fine then, the true Question in this behalf will be,

How often at seldomest does the Scripture enjoin or at least direct Christian People to Communicate?

*Different
opinions of
Divines in
this Case.*

§. 4. I must confess it has been *commonly yielded* by our Divines, that there is *not extant* in Holy Writ any Command, which may determine this frequency. It is indeed allowed by all hands, amongst Protestants, that all adult Christians ought often to Communicate; but whether by the Term *often* we are to mean, *often in the Year* or *often in their Lives*, this is not so well agreed, as it were to be wisht; and tis avowed by some, the Scripture does *no where particularly resolve the Case*, as not by Command, so not otherwise. But we are left, say they, only to *general Rules*: And by those *general Rules*, *forbearance* or *abstaining* many times, yea (for reverence sake) *seldom Communicating*, is by several, even Protestant Divines *directed*, if not *prescribed*: I am sure it has been *too much practised*. The Holy intent of such Divines, in endeavouring to prevent unworthy Receiving, is truly to be

com-

commended; but I conceive it a mistake, and hope I shall prove it so, to say there is nothing but general Rules in Holy Scripture to ascertain this matter; If there be not *express Command to enjoin*, there are certainly *plain precedents to Direct*.

§. 5. But that there *should be* some command extant somewhere in the Body of the New Testament prescribing the measure of frequency at the Lords Table, will seem to any who well considers the case *most rational*. For (to shorten what a Learned Doctor of our own has of late well argued to this purpose) that any Prince should pretend to deliver to his Subjects an intire body of his Laws, and in those Laws strictly, and with repeated earnestness, "require a Tribute to be paid Him by every one of his Subjects, and yet never express the Sum, how much, or when he would have them pay it,

'Tis very Rational that there should be a Command.

Dr. Bury in his Frequent Communicant.

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" seems

" seems incredible. In like manner that our Lord should in *three Evangelists*, and afterwards by the great, *Apostle of the Gentiles*, require his Church, to the end of the World, by a Certain Holy Rite, with Gratitude and Thanksgiving to commemorate his death until his second coming, and yet in that body of Laws, wherein he pretends fully to have consigned to his People his Fathers Will, and even as a Lawgiver his own, never specify how often he would have it done, will not I think be easily digested, when well weighed. 'Tis therefore fit we search narrowly for a Command, and do not too hastily give the point up, that there is none.

A command
assigned.

1. Cor. 11.
25.

S. 6. Now I think I may say confidently, that if there be any Command for any certain frequency of Communicating, those words *This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me;* are that Command: for no where else

use in Scripture is the word *Osten*
so much as used, when there is men-
tion made of this Sacrament. We
will therefore examine this as a
Command of Frequency; and
then produce what precedents
there are, which may further con-
firm the same.

S. 7. As to the true import of *The sense of*
the Command, *This do ye as oft* *the Com-*
as ye drink it in remembrance of *mand Exa-*
me, I must in the entrance hereon *mined and*
admonish, that the particle [*It*] *cleared.*
is not in the Original, and is
Printed for that reason in our
English Bibles, in a different Cha-
racter, to notify, with all faithful-
ness, that it is a word *supplied by*
the Translators. Originally the
Command runs thus Τῷ ποιεῖτε
τοῦτο ὡς ἐν μνήμῃ, *Hoc facite quoti-*
escunque bibetis, saies the vulgar
Latin: and accordingly the Syri-
ack, and all old Versions waveing
the particle. When *It* came to
be inserted I will not now speak
my Conjectures. But I crave leave

to say, the inserting it, has rendered the whole Paragraph obscure and difficult; and is I conceive the only reason, which has made the Text so strangely overlooked, or not taken notice of as a Command for a certain frequency *Overlooked*, I said; in so much that there is not one Father, as far as I can find, and scarce one Commentator extant, that has so much as touched on this Clause *As oft as ye drink it*, or ventured to give any the least Explanation of it. *Hoc facite*, they make a great deal of noise about but as for *quotiescunque bibetis* the words which command frequency, they one and all (*Estius* only, that I have seen excepted) who yet makes the most unnatural inference hence imaginable in defence of their half Communion, all I say else) skip it over; Nay the Authors of the common *Interlineary Glosse*, in all Editions I have met with, leave *quotiescunque bibetis* out of the very Text

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of the Bible; as not knowing what to make of it, or for some other reason that I cannot divine.

But if we read the Words strictly according to the Original, and the Old Versions, what will be the Sense?

In order to the ascertaining this matter I think it necessary to premise, what to me seems undeniable.

1. That these Words are most undoubtedly a Command. Those who to evade this, say they are only an Institution, and no Command, distinguish with more nicety than sense. They are certainly a *Compound Command*, and consist of three Simple ones.

The First, Do this: That is take Wine, Bless or Consecrate it, as you see me to have done, Drink thereof, and distribute it among the Faithful.

Second,

Frequency of Communicating,

The Second, Do this in remembrance of me. For that that Clause, *In remembrance of me*, in the end of the Verse, belongs to the two first words, *do this*, is without controverſie evident from verſe 24, where, in the Conſecration of the Bread, we read without any intervention, *Do this in remembrance of me*; which muſt alſo hold here as to the Conſecration of the Wine.

The Third, Do this in remembrance of me, as oft as ye drink it. That theſe three Branches, thus make up one Compound Command, is Undeniable I conceive.

2. It is farther to be conſidered, that if with our own, and moſt Modern Tranſlations we ſupply the Particle *It*, and thereby underſtand the Cup in the Sacrament, this makes the Command Nugatory, or to ſignifie juſt nothing. For what ſenſe is there in this form of Speech? *drink this*

cup,

Stated from Holy Scripture.

13

cup, as oft as you drink it : Or if we repeat the noun instead of using the pronoun, *drink this cup in remembrance of me, as oft as you drink the cup of remembrance of me.* This would be an interpretation not to be endured ; yet is it plainly what interposing the Particle brings the Command to. Wherefore,

3. Considering the Words more narrowly, we shall find the Verb *πίνετε* stands here absolutely, or by it self. Now in the foregoing part of the Narrative, and wherever it is certainly to be understood of Receiving or Drinking the Sacramental Cup, it never comes without the Case of the Adject immediately after it, to explain and limit it. Πίνετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. In St. Matthew. *Drink ye all of it* Καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. *And they all drank of it,* in St. Mark. And so in our very own Apostle, v. 26. Τὸ ποῖν τοῦ τῆτο *πίνετε. Drink this Cup.* Never I say

Frequency of Communicating,

is the Word *πινεν* to drink, put alone or absolutely, when it certainly signifies Sacramental Drinking.

The Consequence of all which is; that being here differently put, it must be differently rendered or interpreted.

And truly if after many years search, and long thought, I may be allowed to offer a Conjecture, and what to me seems most profitable; I would render the Simple Verb here by its compound, (a Thing in many Authors not infrequent) *πινεν* by *συμπινεν*, or which comes to the same issue, take it in the *Hellenistical* Sense of the Word; that is, interpreted it by the *Hebrew* word that answers it; viz. *חנן* which signifies *Feasting* or *Banqueting*, as well as *Drinking*: And so the Text would run thus; *do this in remembrance of me, as often as you Feast, or on all your Holy Feasts.* Now
for-

forasmuch as every LORD'S DAY was even when this *Epistle* was writ, already amongst the *Christians*, a *Holy Feast*; Therefore the Command will come to thus much, *Do this*, or *Celebrate my Supper every Lords day at least*. At least, I said; for other Holy Feasts they might have besides the *Lords Day*, but this most surely they all had.

For Rendring the *Greek Verb* thus, as often as ye Feast, much might be said, and more than is convenient for a Discourse so brief and plain as this is designed to be. However I must not wave all Scripture Authorities: Particularly, thus is the Word taken throughout the Book of *Esther*, as often as it there recurs; *Esth. VII. 1.* So the King and Haman came to banquet, לשתות literally to Drink: But the *Septuagint* as well as we, read it σπονδῆν, to Banquet or Feast: And ch. 9. 19. a day of Glad-

Gladness and of Feasting, is *המחה והשחה* a Day of gladness and of drinking. So to v. 22. and throughout the Book I say. So again in *Eccles. VII. 2.* The house of Feasting is *בית משחה* the house of drinking: And so in *Jer. 16. 8.* and in other places. But let us not therefore any of us encourage our selves to keep our Feasts with immoderate Drinking, as is too often the Custom: For such Feasting as that, is condemned by the *Holy Ghost*, as part of the Conversation of *Heathens* and *Infidels*. *1 Pet. 4. 3.* The time past of your lives may suffice (saith the Apostle) to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles, when ye walked in *Lasciviousness, Lusts, Revelling, Banquetings*, &c. *Πότοις.* Drinkings in the Original. The same Word, thence still: And such Feasting as this we must know it was, which brought in that abominable Profanation of the *Lords Supper*, taxed by the *Apostle* in the Eleventh of the first to the *Corinthians*, v. 21.

the

s in the Context to the Words we are
 s and now upon ; this therefore is to be
 and abhorred by all Christian People.
 So as to return to the Command it
 house self, the plain meaning thereof I
 house conceive to be ; *see that ye my Dis-*
 6. 8 *iples, as oft as ye feast, do this in re-*
 let us *embrance of me , i. e. “ Cele-*
 urage *brate my Supper, and particu-*
 with *larly drink the Cup of remem-*
 s too *brance of my Blood: (I do not*
 Feast *tend this to all Feasts, or to*
 y the *uch Feasts, which as common*
 nver *men, or in any Civil Capacity,*
 fids *we make (though these certainly*
 r your *ought to be sober :) But to those*
 ostle *which we hold as Disciples of*
 e Gen *Christ ; Holy Feasts) “ See you*
 vious *Disciples or Followers of Christ,*
 tings *upon all your holy Feasts, (and*
 he O *ch by the way are all Lords*
 , on *Daies) see you do this in re-*
 ng as *membrance of me. It is as*
 which *ch as if he had said ; I know*
 e Pro *that you my Disciples will keep*
 taxed *every first day of the Week as*
 nth o *a holy Feast with joy and glad-*
 v. 21 *ness, in memory of my Resur-*
 the *rection ;*

" rection; and I intend so to wife
 " der it. Now see that every su you
 " day, you remember my Suffe an Fe
 " ings too as well as my Refu his is
 " rection: *do this, and thus sh* cover
 " *forth my Death till I come.* scriptur
 e Lor

2 Pet. II.
 13.
 Jude 12.

That the Primitive Christian
 used every *Lords Day* to hold the S. 8.
Feasts of Charity; which we re the
 of in *Holy Scripture*, there is the P
 question: *Justin Martyr, Tertu* d in t
an, and others of the Ancien this S
 are so exprefs herein. And at I f
 keeping such Feasts, as appe on th
 by the comparing St. Peters a Disc
 St. *Judes* Text with the 1 Cor. ad, I
 20, 21, &c. had prevailed even nothing
 the days when the *Apostle* writ by Tel
Epistle. There can be no dou ints
 therefore but he might in toles (
 words of that Text *ordinis* ans)
minute, have respect to the *sembl*
 Custom: For my part I truly y of
 lieve he had, and that the exp ason,
 cation I have given of this Com em, a
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ry sue you Feast, or on all your Chri-
Suffe an Feasts, in remembrance of me.
Refu his is the Summe of what I can
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S. 8. And it will be confirmed
the Precedents and Examples
the Primitive frequency, recor-
d in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and
this *St. Paul's Epistle*. The first
at I shall produce is *Acts 20. 7.*
on the first day of the week, when
Disciples came together to break
bread, Paul preached unto them.
Nothing can be more plain from
y Testimony, than are these two
ints hence. 1. That the Dis-
ciples (that is, the *Primitive Chri-*
tians) even then used to hold their
semblies on the Lords Day, or first
day of the Week. And for this
reason, Paul chose to Preach to
them, at *Troas* on that day, be-
cause he should meet with a fuller
Assembly. 2. That the great, so-
lemn

The first
Precedent
from Scri-
pture.

lemn or constant office of the day in breaking of bread, i. e. Celebrating the Lords Supper: For this (as was before noted) was Weekly Feast or Festival, so early kept, in all Churches, in memory of our *Lords Resurrection*; and that so constantly, that it is one of those Canons, which for Antiquities sake are Stiled the *Apostles Canons*; "that if a Clergyman fast on the *Lords Day* he shall be deposed; if a Lay-man do so, he shall be excommunicated. But if any look on these Canons as they please, this instance which I have Cited of the *Christians at Troas*, undoubted *Scripture*; and let it stand as the first Precedent for Communicating every *Lords Day*. Which also confirms the interpretation I have given of that Text *ὡς ὅτις ἀν πινυτε*, Do this as often as you *Christians* keep any Holy Feast, and therefore every *Lords Day*, for every *Lords Day* is such

§. 9. Again in the 1 *Epistle to the Corinthians*, it seems to me we have two instances pertinent to our Case: The first in his 11th chapter, v. 20, 21. the other in the last.

§. The Second Precedent.

In Chap. 11. 20, 21. we read thus. *When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lords Supper. For in eating every one hath before other his own Supper, and one is hungry and another is drunk.* The Apostles Style here is a little elliptical (short and therefore obscure) and his words are very capable of a double rendring; as indeed our Interpreters, if we take the Marginal rendring for a part of their Translation, have already doubly rendred them. When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat, or ye cannot eat the Lords Supper, Οὐκ ἔστι φαγεῖν. The Sense is plainly this; being come together into one place, as ye behave your selves; neither is

is what you do eating of the *Lords Supper*, nor can you be behaving your selves eat the *Lords Supper*. For *ver. 21.* In eating every one (namely that hath in his own bringing) taketh before hand his own Supper ; and one hungry and another is drunken. He had taxed them before, *v. 19.* that they in their publick Assemblies *met together, not for the better but for the worse.* This he proves from hence that they behave themselves so when they came together, as by *their divisions, and abuses of their Feasts of Charity* to bring themselves into such condition, that they neither *nor could*, as became the Holy Institution, *eat the Lords Supper.*

His Argument in form is plain thus. They who come together and so behave themselves, who come together, that they neither do, nor can, eat the *Lords Supper* (that is, as it becomes the Holy Institution) come together

for the better but for the worse.
 that ye by your dividing into par-
 ses, and in eating, taking every
 one beforehand his own Supper, so
 that one is hungry and another is
 drunken, so behave your selves
 that you neither do nor can, in
 this condition, eat the *Lords Sup-*
 per, as it becomes the Holy Insti-
 tution.

Therefore you come together
 not for the better but for the worse.
 In this Argument I say, evidently
 proposes, that whensoever they as-
 sembled or came together, they
 came to eat the *Lords Supper*: For
 it is taken for granted, that com-
 munion together so, as not to eat, or
 not to be able, as becomes it, to
 eat the *Lords Supper*; is coming
 together not for the better but for
 the worse. Now they used to as-
 semble or come together every
Lords Day; therefore they used at
 that, every *Lords Day*, to eat the
Lords Supper, or *Communicate*.

*The third
Precedent.*

S. 10. Further yet; there is another place in this *Epistle*, which may be justly pleaded, as a Record or Precedent of weekly Communion, or of Receiving the Lords Supper every *Lords Day* in the *Apostles* Age, and that even expresses Apostolical Order. I will confess the Celebration of the *Lords Supper* is not there expressed but from what is expressed it may be plainly enough inferred. The place is in *1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.* *Now concerning the Collection of the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, so do ye. Upon every first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God had prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come.* These Words in all probability have Relation to the Offertory; and thus some such Paraphrase as this may make clear. On the first Day of the Week, when all such of you as are able, set aside something to carry with you to the Assembly

for an Offering towards the Feast
of Charity, lay aside each of
you, as God has blessed you that
Week, to what you set apart, some-
thing for the poor Saints I have
commended to you *ἵνα μὴ ὅταν*
ἔλθω τότε λόγια γένωνται, (an un-
usual and Metaphorical word
here used, saies *Erasmus* alluding
to gathering Sheaves in Harvest)
That when I come every one need
not be looking how or where to
get his *quotam*, or going to his
Nurse, or heap, or the small
stock he has, to gather thence a
convenient Portion, but all being
done Weekly by degrees, and put
together as into a Treasure by it
self, the whole may be made up
by such quantities, as you can
best spare, and according as God
has Blessed you; by which means
the sum may be easie to you, and
ready for us: this I say plainly
enough, as I conceive, relates to
the Offertory. Now it is most
certain the Offertory was ever from
the Apostles daies an inseparable

B

appen-

appendance of the Lords Supper
 But the Apostle gave command
 here, that the poor believing Jews
 should be remembered, every first
 day of the Week, by the *Corin-*
thians with a share at their Offer-
 tory; Therefore every first day
 of the Week there was an Offer-
 tory; Therefore also every first
 day of the Week a Communion
 at *Corinth*, as above at *Troas*, and
 at other places among the Gen-
 tile *Christians*, and that *by the A-*
postles order. Before we dismiss
 this Text let us observe those
 words, *Upon the first day of the*
Week, and *Every one of you*: Not
 one, no not of the common *Chri-*
stians, used ordinarily to be ab-
 sent on the Lords Day from the
 Offertory; therefore neither from
 the Communion, or from the
 Lords supper upon the Lords
 Day. I have thus with what brev-
 ity I could, laid before the
 Readers the only Command
 know in Scripture, ascertaining
 any thing as to Frequent Commu-

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communicating, and also divers precedents; all which conclude for Communicating every Lords Day.

*The first
Objection
answered.*

S. II. Against the Practice, I plead for, I am not Ignorant many things may be Objected: First, it may possibly be said by some, that the Primitive, at least the first Christians, Communicated oftener much than each Lords Day; and so did divers Churches in the Beginning. I answer it is indeed most true: And an Infallible Record we have thereof, Act. II. 46. The words are, *And they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.* For better understanding of which Verse, it will be convenient to compare with it v. 42. *And they continued stedfast in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.* The word we render Fellowship is *Koinonía* and it signifies

nifies in all likelihood, that Community of Goods, or liberal Communication to the wants of others, which was in practice in those extraordinary daies, immediately upon the Miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost : *They had all things in common*; ver. 44, *Acts* Ch. 4. 24. Now in the short time that such Community lasted at *Jerusalem*, (for it was but a short time, and only at *Jerusalem*, as far as I know or can find) the Christian People lived as one great Family, a Society by themselves separate from the world; and the most of their day they spent in public Devotions in the Temple. Now as to the necessary Refreshments of Nature, the use of those Times and Countries being but one *se* Meale a day, which was their Supper, when in the Evening they departed from the Temple, they went in such Companies as the House would contain, to one another's private Houses; where the Company making up a little Assembly,

Com. sembly, they religiously Supped
Com. together, and at Supper Celebra-
hers, ted the *Communion*; which is here
e ex called *breaking of Bread*, and said
ately to be done *from house to house*:
n of For that the *Lords Supper*, (that is
d all the Commemoration of his Death,
Ec. whom the *Jews* had so lately *Cru-*
time cified) would have been a publick
at Je affront to the *Jews*, if held daily
short in the Temple, and so not per-
n, as mitted to them in the Temple,
the or Publickly, as was *Prayer* and
great Teaching. This was certainly then
elves the practice of those *Jerusalem*.
d the *Christians*: But this daily *Communi-*
pub- cating, as plainly appears, was
Now pecular to that State, and there-
nents fore extraordinary. However it
Times manifestly asserts, at least agrees
e se with the explication of the Com-
Sup- mand, which we have above gi-
they ven. *Do this, as often as you holily*
they *feast together in remembrance of me.*
s the It therefore rather confirms than
e ano makes against what has been said.

Objections
from our
Church-
Rubricks
answered.

§. 12. 2. Another sort haply may object our *Church-Rubrick* after the Communion Office, whereby She seems content with the Peoples Communicating only *thrice in the year*, and to require no more. To which I answer; It is a great mistake to say that our Church either has required no more, or that She is content generally with this; for both are false. And to shew the Sense of the Church, even at the Reformation, when that *Rubrick* was made, give me leave very briefly to set forth the *State of things at that time*, and the *Rules* our Church has made as to this matter.

The Ru-
bricks ex-
plained and
Vindica-
ted.

§. 13. The State of Things was this: The People were then generally ignorant, superstitious, and prepossessed with false and corrupt Opinions as to this Sacrament. They had been long bred to be Spectators of the Priest, while

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while he *Celebrated* (as the term was) that is, while he read over the *Latin* office of the Masse, with a world of antick Gestures and Ceremonies, Consecrating and receiving in both kinds alone. This the Peoples *assisting*, or being present at the Masse, they had been long taught to be greater Devotion, than if they frequently communicated. Once a year perhaps (and the more devout sort twice) at *Easter* (and *Christmas*) had a small broken part of a Wafer put into their Mouth by the Priest, but were never admitted to the Cup; And this with them was Communicating: which together with Confession to the Priest beforehand, and being charged with some slight Penance, was ordinarily the summe of what they were possessed to be their Duty as to this Point. Now for Reformation of this heap of Corruptions, to bring over the Body of the People from *Communicating once a year*, to *Communicate once a week*,

was too great a Change for the Church to *hope* the accomplishing of *all at once*; She *did* therefore what She found *feasible*. And first, She requires Communicating every *Lords Day*, only as to *some sort of persons*, and where it was at that time practicable: So the *RUBRICK* runs. In Cathedral and Collegiate Churches and Colleges, where there are many Priests and Deacons, they shall all receive the Communion with the Priest every Sunday at the least, except they have a reasonable cause to the Contrary, and observe the Words **EVERY SUNDAY** at least; oftner sometimes, as a great Festival, or some other more special occasion might require; but **EVERY SUNDAY at least**, is enjoined.

Secondly, Even in the *smallest Parishes*, wherein there were not above *twenty adult Persons*, She leaves it to the *discretion of the Priest*, that if there were but
four

four of them, or three of them at least, to Communicate with him, there might be a Communion: as may be seen in the second and third *Rubricks* after the *Communion*.

But in the end, least there should be any *failure* in the *discretion of the Priest*, or both in his and the *Peoples Devotion*, She thought fit to reinforce an old Canon (though that not by many hundred years so old as the Practice of Communicating every *Lords Day*) in these words of the penult *Rubrick*. And note that every *Parishioner* shall communicate at least three times in the year, of which *Easter* to be one. Not but that the generality of them may, and ought to Communicate oftner; but the most *Negligent* and *Indifferent* of them, if they do not Communicate thus oft, by Her Laws fall under *Church-censures*.

In a word, and upon the whole; the summe of these Rubricks, and of our Church-Laws as to Frequency of Communicating is this. Christian People of discretion, as the Rubrick Styles them, if they could be brought to it, ought to Communicate generally every Lords Day; and accordingly a Communion-Service for every Lords Day in the year is prepared. The Clergy in Cathedrals and Colleges, where there is a competent number of them together, are enjoined **at least every Lords Day to Communicate.** In Parochial Churches, if Minister and People seriously would set themselves to attend their Christian Duty, there may ordinarily be Communion every Lords Day. But as to the most negligent both of Ministers and People, if the one Celebrate not the Communion, and the other receive it not *three times a year*; the Church Wardens, according to the Canon and their Instructi-

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ons, shall present them both, and both are punishable. Now let any person judge, whether, after such Laws, it can be said our Church is content with Communions thrice a year. We have then thus I think fully removed this plausible pretence of a lukewarm sort of men.

S. 14. But the Grand Objection of moment from any serious People, that I can see against weekly Communicating, and which I will acknowledge to be often made by Persons of Conscience, is this : *We cannot every week be prepared, and so neither dare we communicate, nor may the Priest celebrate : For he, not having three or four to communicate with him, must by the Rubrick omit the Communion, and let it fall.* In answer whereto I say briefly, those who come to the Lords Supper, are either Young, or else grown Communicants.

The Grand Objection from want of preparation answered.

I do

I do not deny but the young ones ought, as the world goes now, to take a great deal of time, and a great deal of pains too, in *forming themselves, in examining Conscience, in Prayers, in solemn Repentance, and in other preparations*: Of which much, and very well has been written, and is daily spoken by very great persons. But those who have never yet, or but seldom Communicated, are not the persons I press to Communicate every *Lords Day*, especially not at first: And even as to grown Communicants, according as many of them order their matters, being Religious only by fits, they are much in the same condition with those younger Persons now spoken of. But give me leave, as a Foundation for the full answering this Objection, to distinguish (as of two sorts of Communicants, so) of two sorts of preparation for the *Lords Supper*: There is either the *Modern* or the *Primitive*

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Primitive

Primitive preparation, if I may have leave to use such Terms,

§. 15. The Modern I call that, which the *Modern Christianity* has brought up, and perhaps made (to most People) necessary: And that is spending one day or more in Fasting and Reading and Prayer, and in like Devotions, which I am far from censuring or speaking against; where it is done with

Of the Modern preparation for the Lords Supper.

First, Sincere Intention.

Secondly, With Prudence.

Thirdly, With due understanding our Selves and the Duties we pretend to.

So Far am I from blameing Devotions truly such as these, that I pray God the Number of such Devouts may daily Increase. There is great need of those that mourn in our Sion: but commonly, weak people having spent a Month or two,

two, or more perhaps, somewhat loosely, and at random or Idly, (in neglect of God and their Duty) think to make a fair amends for all, by a Day or two's Demureness, and shut up themselves a while, till having by such recess, and a little poring on some Good Book, which too often they understand not, amused themselves, and abated (for the present) their late Gay Temper, they think themselves, because now not quite so airy as usual, fairly prepared for the Communion; and then come, the next *Sunday*, with a great deal of Fear and Trembling, and with a sort of forced Concern (but little true Composure) to the *Lord's Table*. Whereof the Original, in plain *English*, is this; People are *Strangers to the true nature of Religion*: They in common Life, week after week, act at random; or live at all peradventure with God: they serve divers Lusts and Pleasures, they set their Affections on the

world

world, fulfil the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind, in little or nothing denying their Appetite, or Pride, or Vanity; and then to commute for a Month (perhaps two or three Months) Irreligion and Negligence of Life, they take up a *Fit of Devotion*, (which, alas, is far from what is meant by Religion) and afflict themselves one Day and go to the *Communion* another; and then to their own vain worldly Conversation again.

Now this *Fit of Devotion*, which they take for Religion (for I must again call it only a *Fit*) taken up some one day or two in the Week, and continuing on *Sunday*, they account both preparation and devout Receiving. Whereas, in truth, these People had need to set upon a Solemn Humiliation, as for their other Sins and Errors, so even for this their Mistake in the Nature of True Religion. They even as Young Communicants (for young they are in point of Discretion) have

have need of better Information in the very Nature of the first Christian Vertues, and especially of *Religion*: That it *consists*, not meerly in the performance of a few Outward Duties, but primarily in the *belief* and *Constant Fear* of *God*, in *acknowledging him* in all our Ways, and *giving our selves up entirely to obey him*. They have need of more strict Examination and Knowledge of themselves, of a more through and durable Repentance; that is, a true Amendment and Change, both of Heart and Life, once for all. This, if they did go about in good earnest, they would arrive at an habitual State of Preparedness, for the *Lord's Supper*, and for all Holy Offices; they would ever have a *Pure Intention* to do such things as are *well pleasing to God*, and nothing else. By this means they would be able to communicate with Free Hearts, Easie and Cheerful Minds, without Fear, Trembling and amazement; with Souls full of peace

and

and joy in believing. In a word, they would have Holy Hearts, and the constant testimony of a Good Conscience, which I call the *Primitive Preparation* : And give me leave to add farther in explication of it a word or two.

J. 16. There are yet, I doubt not, left in the world, and even amongst us of the Church of *England*, whatsoever some may think of us (God be Blessed) a more *Primitive sort of Christians*, than those Moderns I have been treating of; people who are constantly and uniformly Religious. They have Truly Repented, that they Reformed all their Sins, and neither allow themselves in any known Evil, nor in the neglect of any known Duty; Though they follow the business of their common Callings most of the Week, with diligence, yet they all along find

*Of the
Primitive
Preparation,
and
Primitive
Christianity.*

find time to Worship God, and they A
 examine Conscience every Day heart f
 Or if the Day escape them, f the
 Night they commune with their own are is
 hearts upon their Beds and seare throug
 out their Spirit. By this mean and m
 the Love of God is shed abroad y Pra
 their Hearts, and their Minds are olution
 seldom or never without an actua having
 sense of the Divine Majesty upon hearf
 them, and of their Obligation an C
 to him, and from thence a stud s to h
 of Gratitude to this their Constan alk w
 and Infinite Benefactor. They hav eat w
 a universal Love to Mankind, an f Hea
 so can never be many Minute acting
 (if at all) out of Charity with maligni
 particular Men. When any S own v
 overtakes them (as what Ma our.
 liveth and Sinneth not?) the words
 immediately renew their Repelcom
 tance, and apply themselves ce of
 Faith to that Sacrifice, which being ecause
 once Offered, has for ever perfectl ; T
 those who are Sanctified. The tion f
 Sleep not knowingly and willing is the
 ly with the Guilt of any Sin upon very D
 their Conscience; Or if, whe ive, a
 the

and they Awake in the Morning, *their*
 Day *Heart smite them* for any miscarriage
 n, of the former Day, their first
 ir our is to supplicate for Pardon
 fear through the Blood of *J E S U S*,
 mean and make their Peace with God,
 load by Prayer, Supplications and Re-
 ds and solutions of a stricter care: Which
 actual having done, they with Faith and
 upon cheerfulness go on in their Chri-
 ation an Course, and so live on Earth
 study to have an Eye at Heaven, and
 constant *walk with God*. They eat their
 y have Meat with Gladness and singleness
 d, and of Heart, envying no Man, de-
 linute acting from no Man, much less
 y with maligning any; and at night lye
 ny Sown with Comfort in Gods Fa-
 t Maour. Such Persons long for the
 the Lords Day before it comes, and
 Repel welcome its Arising Sun: No Of-
 ves ice of the Day surprizes them,
 n being because they expect, and desire
 perfected; They have a perpetual reso-
 The tion for Heaven and Holiness;
 willing is they carry still about them,
 n upon every Day and every Night they
 whe live, and wherever they go: and
 the this

this whoever has, is always fit for the Lords Table. Such a Heart will never be rejected by God and *Christ*, for the Holy Ghost (the Spirit of God) dwells in it; and at any time a little recollection of Thought, and lifting up the Heart to God, soon stirs up the Grace of God in these Persons, and their Souls naturally fall in with the Holy Office

This was the primitive preparation. And if Christian People would live according to the Character I have given, as I hope many of us do, they would be as constantly prepared for the Lords Supper, as the Lords Day comes. And so this Objection falls also.

*The summe
of the
whole E-
vidence.*

S. 17. And now I have dispatched all Objections of moment, which I have met with or can easily devise, against either the Doctrine I have delivered, or the Practise I have pleaded for.

Let

Let it be therefore Lawful for me,
 ere to *summe up the whole Evidence*
 have given for *Weekly Communi-*
ating in a short and close Form;
 the whole from Scripture.

I say then, As to such Offices
 of Worship, wherein if we Chri-
 tians would do, what in a com-
 mon course of things, we are able
 to do, the Offices are confessedly
 in our power, *It is not safe,* for
 ny (though the Command should
 be disputable) *Ordinarily, Wil-*
ingly and Advisedly to go below
the lowest precedent in Holy Scrip-
ture. But Communicating in a
 Christian sort, is an Office of
 Worship; and to Communicate
 every Lords Day, must be con-
 fessed, if we (that is Ministers
 and People) would do, what in
 common course of things we
 are able to do, to be in our power;
 and is finally the lowest precedent
 of Communicating in Holy Scrip-
 ture; It is not therefore safe for
 ny (though the Command should
 be

be disputable) Ordinarily, W
lingly, and advisedly to negle
Communicating every Lords Day

Thus it seems to me, closely
and most evidently conclude
from Scripture, that to receive
the Lords Supper, every Lord
Day, is such a Duty, that no S
rious and Conscientious Christian
who has opportunity and leisure
can ordinarily omit.

*The Con-
clusion of
all, being
a persua-
sive to
weekly
Communi-
cating.*

S. 18. Give me leave now
by way of Conclusion to pre
this practice upon all who re
this.

I may safely say there is nothing
can ordinarily hinder people from
it, but there aversefness and un
willingness to such life and temper
as worthy Receiving requires
In plain English let the general
of Christians pretend what they
please, they are not willing to
part with their Sins, or to have
their Hearts taken off from the

love

Why love of this World. Otherwise they would have a better appetite both for Heaven and the Means thereto ; and especially for this Heavenly Banquet.

But let all Good People , for God's sake, and their own sake, consider the Matter.

Can you, Christian Brethren, think to go to Heaven with Hearts full of the love of your Sins, or even of this World ? Why do you then so greedily so perpetually pursue both ? Why do you not in time set yourselves to break off this destructive Course ? Must not you wean your selves from those vile affections, before you can be capable of Heaven or Heavenly happiness ? And is it not your interest to be daily capable, to be hourly ready for the Lord's Call ? Are you not most irremediable and incapable for ever, if when he takes you from hence, you are found in an estate of enmity with

with God ? And supposing that you have reconciled your selves to God, and quitted your Sins, and set your hearts on God and Heavenly Goods; will not that which qualifies you for Heaven qualify you for the Lord's Table or Constitute you worthy Communicants ? If you are then in good earnest for Heaven, you see you must do what prepares you for this Sacrament, whether you partake of it or no ; you can never else be saved. And if you have done what prepares you, you are prepared to Communicate. What excuse then have you for your neglect ? Where's the Difficulty ? Is it a painful thing to commemorate your Lords Death that is, his Love to you ? Has he not deserved it at your hands. Can you too often think of his unparallel'd Bowels of Compassion and Tendernefs for you ? Can you do your Souls a greater Service, than to be often meditating of what he has done for them

and

and so possessing them with Love
and Gratitude to him?

I trust these Considerations may
induce many to what I have been
pressing: And I dare assure such, if
they once set up and maintain the
Practice of what I called *Primitive*
Preparedness, and *Primitive* (that
is, weekly) *Communicating*, they
will soon find it incomparably the
most Blessed Course of Life they ever
entered into; For besides that it
will prove otherwise beneficial,
they will find it,

1st. *A most Universal Antidote*
against Temptations of all Kinds:
For nothing strengthens Resoluti-
on like it. They will find it,

2^{dly}. *A Certain Means to sancti-*
fy to them every Condition of Life,
and to turn all, that does or can
befall them, to good unto them.
For it will bring them to take
every thing (bitter or sweet, ad-
verse

verse or prosperous) by the right handle ; and besides, derive God's Blessing in all upon them. They will find it,

3dly. *A Sovereign Preparation against Death* ; which first or last will come to all : And woe be to such whom Death finds unprepared.

Lastly, There is not imaginable a surer *Consignation, or sealing us up to a Blessed Resurrection and Eternal Glory*, than thus living the Life, and frequently commemorating the Death of our Dear Saviour, according to his Commands and Institutions. This constitutes us truly Members of his Body, and will infallibly advance us to him our Head in Heaven.

Now the Good God ensure to all who shall thus weekly communicate, all these Benefits ; and

Stated from Holy Scripture.

51

*as to those, who shall not, the
same God affect their Hearts
with such a sense of these Goods,
that they may no longer live neg-
ligent of their Duty in a Mat-
ter of so high concernment.*

Amen.

C 2

POST-

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Must confess the Interpretation I have given of the Command produced, in the Foregoing Discourse (§. 6, 7.) is new: And the true Cause why I have advanced a New Interpretation of it, is, for that, on those Words, which I explain, I could find none older, except one, a few Years ago given by a Learned Doctor, whose Name and Book I have cited §. 5. The Reasons I had not to adhere to that Reverend Person's Sense of this Place, I therefore would not here insert, because I would not have this so brief a Discourse charged with Controversie. The Rea-

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der will be pleased to take notice, I impose not my own Exposition, only propose it as the most Probable I yet can find : And I here sacredly profess, I will be not only joyful, but thankful, to be better instructed by whatever hand shall undertake it : For Singularity is the last thing I shall affect.

Mean while I think fit to acknowledge how I came to think of this Interpretation, and by what degrees I took it up.

I had almost from my first being a Communicant, scrupled the Sense of that Command; at least, as to St. Paul's Additional Clause, *ὁμοῦς αὐτῇ μυστῇ*. I wondred at the supplying or interposing the Particle *it*, in our Translation. For being able early to read the Original, and when I grew up, frequently so doing, I observed no Express Object added in the Text, nor any good Reason

for understanding one ; and thought that, which was by our Interpreters supply'd, very suspicious, if not improper : Though I must ingeniously acknowledge, neither with, nor without the Particle supply'd, could I for a long time satisfie my self of any certain Sense of that Clause in that Place : At length, having gotten, and reading the *Syriac* Version, I found the Passage there to run thus ; כל אמתו רשותו אנתון : That is, Word for word, *Every time you are feasting or drinking* : For in *Syriack* and *Hebrew* the word signifies both indifferently. Now tho' I knew well that the use of the Particle here was only the *Syrians Idiom*, and that they are constrained to that Form of Speech by want of the *Present Tense* in *Verbs* ; yet the Litteral rendring that Text out of the *Syriac*, run in my Head so long, till I concluded the Act here meant could not be the Act of Persons solitary, or by themselves,

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but of People in Company ; and so must be taken either for Feasting ; or, which is much the same for such Drinking, as is that of People at a Feast. Wherefore observing the Silence of *Writers* as to these words ; and finding no better, I thought this the most proper Interpretation of the *Text*.

I have a great deal more to say for justifying this Notion, than is convenient here to set down. And I am the more confirm'd in it by the Practice of the *Apostolick Churches*, while the *Apostles* were yet living ; who at their Feasts of Charity, on the *Lord's-Days*, always celebrated the *Lord's-Supper*. And the whole *Christian Church*, in all Ages since, has generally kept up the *Lord's-Supper*, at least, every *Lord's-Day* ; though by reason of the Decay of Devotion, in many Ages, and most Places, there has been too little resort to it.

I have at present by me a *Deduction* of this Usage through the several Centuries since *Christ's* Time, Age by Age, in the *Christian Church*, proving it truly Catholic; wherein I have endeavoured to be Exact. If I shall find the Case to require it, I shall publish that also. *Sed hæc hactenus* : I pray God all other Christian People may find as much Benefit and Satisfaction by this Practice as I have done.

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Weekly Communicating.

*Upon the First Day of the Week
when the Disciples came toge-
ther to break Bread, Paul preach-
ed unto them, Acts 20. 7.*

*The Second Edition, Corrected by the
Author.*

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year MDCCIII.

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T H E

INTRODUCTION.

I Have, ever since God blessed me with understanding the Doctrine and Constitution of the Church of England (which, next to the Knowledge of Christ, and him Crucified, common to all Churches, I reckon the most Salutary Knowledge I ever received; and for which I shall ever praise his Name, tho' I can never praise it sufficiently) I have, I say, ever since I understood

The Introduction.

stood her Reformation, admired the Wisdom with which she Reformed, as being truly from above; First, Pure, then Peaceable, Gentle, and Easie to be Intreated : Full of Mercy and Good Fruits ; without Partiality, and without Hypocrisie. For it appeared most evident to me, that through all she designed nothing more, than to remove the Corruptions, which on one hand and on the other, I mean in any Extreame, had been brought in ; and to restore the Ancient, and, (as near as might be) Primitive Purity. And if some of her Rubricks and Canons seem to any to have wanted due Warranty from Scriptures, they who think so, will do well to consider what

The Introduction.

what those times would bear ;
and that that may be warranted
by a General Rule, for which
there is no particular Text
producibile or necessary. Where
the Letter of Scripture reaches
not a Case, the e prudential rea-
sons must be admitted to direct.

In the matter before us ; The
Lord's Supper had under Po-
pery been strangely Monopoliz-
ed ; the Priest after his way,
in many places, Communicating.
(that is, Celebrating as they style
it) ordinarily every day, and
the people seldom or never ; At
least not above once or twice in
the year : Our Church being to
reform this Abuse, first, pre-
pares a Communion-Office for
every Lords Day and Holi-
day

The Introduction.

day in the Year, that no Congregation might be, for want of that, uncommunicated on any of those days.

Next in her Rubrick appertaining to that Office, she takes away that practical Contradiction, or heap of Solecisms, the Priest's Communicating alone. **There shall be, (says she) no Celebration of the Lord's Supper, except there be a convenient number to Communicate with the Priest, according to his Discretion.** But let the Parish be never so short, if there be but four, or even three Persons of Discretion to Communicate with the Priest, there may by the next Rubrick, at the discretion of the Priest, be a Communion every Sunday.

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The Introduction.

And in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, where by the number of Clergy-men there need not fail three or four Adult Persons to Communicate weekly, it is enjoined, The Priests and Deacons shall all receive the Communion with the Minister every Sunday, except they have a reasonable cause to the contrary: Which last was truly the Apostolical Practice, Acts 20. 7.

And as to what is required in these foregoing Rubricks, relating to Parochial Churches, if thereof we find few or no foot-steps in Holy Scripture, the reason is because neither the Romish Corruptions, which they provide against, nor the Epidemical.

The Introduction.

cal lukewarmness of the Christian Multitude (*which though the Church could not remedy, yet she would no farther tolerate than as ancient Canons had done*) had not, when the Books of the New Testament were Written, given any Occasion for such Rules. But as to the Prudence of the Reformers in these, I conceive it will approve it self to any who maturely consider the Case, and what Orders are made in it.

These few Rubricks mentioned are the Summe of our Churches Reformation, in the present case of Frequency : Wherein her Injunctions being so Gentle, and withal so expressly conform to the Primitive Pattern, it is to me matter of Amazement

The Introduction.

ment that some should complain,
the enjoyns herein what in the
present Age is impractica-
ble.

I trust, if any of these Com-
plainants please to peruse and con-
sider this short Devotional
Piece which follows, they will
change their minds, and confess
that Compliance and strict
Conformity to our Church, in
such Weekly Communicating,
is with very good Conscience
possible: And I dare assure them,
if according to these Rules they
set up and maintain such Pra-
ctice, they will find it highly
Beneficial and Pleasant; one of
the greatest Comforts and Joys on
this side Heaven: Especially if
Gods Providence should ever cast
them

The Introduction.

them into such a condition, that they have Death daily in view, as some can remember themselves in a certain Kingdom, some Years ago to have had for a considerable time together; and as Persons, when at least they grow into Years, ought constantly to have. Such as these would be glad, if they could, to communicate almost every day that every day they might allude to that Passage in St. Cyprrian, touching the use in time) be ready, if not to die for the Lord, yet at least to die whensoever he calls them; to be willing to go to their Saviour upon every Summons.

Epist. l. 4.
Ep. 6.

I stand to it, There is no Sovereign Preservative against any

on. The Introduction.

any Degree of Apostasy or
falling from Christian Temper, no
such Antidote against the ter-
ror of Death, no such Cordi-
al or Cheerer of the Spirits, which
will fill a Devout Soul with so
much Courage and even Joy,
against its passage through the
dark Vale of the Grave, as the
frequent participation of those
precious Pledges of our Lords
Death and Sufferings for ^{Ignat. in}
^{Ep. ad}
^{Ephes.}
Sinners, that Medicine of Im-
mortality, that Seal or great
Earnest of our blessed Resurrecti-
on.

I therefore to all such; who
would be prepared for whatso-
ever comes, who would either
live holily and heavenly, or die
comfortably, with Peace, As-
surance,

The Introduction.

2 Tim. 4.
18.

urance, or even with tolerable Satisfaction, recommend the Practice I here have subjoyned and commit them and my self to the Grace of our good God, beseeching him to deliver us all from every Evil Work, and preserve us unto his Heavenly Kingdom. To him be Glory for ever and ever, Amen.

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F O R

Weekly Communicating.

SECT. I

How People ought to be qualified who are fit to be Weekly Communicants.

I Suppose all whom I judge fit to be *Weekly Communicants* to be thus *Qualified*, as follows.

First, To be Persons who are in good earnest for Heaven; I mean, who

who really believe Christianity
 and endeavour *to keep an actual*
sense of the Christian Doctrine
 (of God and a Resurrection, and
 Eternal Judgment, together with
 the like truths) on their hearts
 who therefore value the saving
 their Souls above any Interest on
 Earth; and are resolved to take
 care of that *one Thing necessary*
whatever becomes of the World
 Whether they prove rich or poor
 whether they be in Favour with
 great Men or out of Favour, in
 Honour or Dishonour, they ac-
 count it to be of small concern-
 ment in comparison of the keep-
 ing of a good Conscience, with-
 out which they cannot be in fa-
 vour with God or themselves.
 This *Resolution* therefore they im-
 moveably fix on, *Never knowingly*
or deliberately to do or omit any
thing, which may endanger their
missing Heaven, or putting them out
of God's Favour. Heaven is the
 Great End, the Portion, and Treas-
 ure they propose to themselves;
 and

and this they will above all other matters pursue.

Secondly, I suppose them also to be competently knowing in the *Body of the Christian Religion*: that is, to understand the plain Sense (1) of our Christian Faith, *The Creed and all its Articles*: (2) Of the *Christian Law* and so the Sum of all undoubted Duties. Or, to have early learnt some good Catechism; and in a word, either to have been Religiously brought up, or if they had the unhappiness of an ill Education, to have made some amends for it in their Riper Years, by having given themselves to study and understand their Religion, according as God has given them opportunities.

Under this Head of *Knowledge* willingly would comprehend a good *Understanding*, the *Communion Service* in our Church Liturgy; wherein if any Devout Souls be to

to seek, as to the sense of any impru-
 thing, I would have such persons waste
 consult their Minister, or read who
 that part of Dr. Comber's Excel- follow
 tent Book, which treats thereon Days,
 For the being intimately versed in ous a
 the meaning and design of each posed,
 part of that Heavenly Office they a
 much helps *continued Devotion* first,
 and *Holy Affection* throughout the last C
 whole Solemnity. well in
 cumstan

Now persons that are thus qual- or rise
 lified as these two Particulars re- taking
 quire, (3dly) Either *have* or will ing to I
 find leisure more or less daily for not en
 Devotion, and improving their Souls the day
 in the Knowledge of the Holy, and who ar
 in Christian Virtue. People of Commu
 Condition (while in health) have leisure,
 leisure if they please ; or if they enough
 can get leave of themselves, and themself
 will not take up too much of the
 Evening in Gaming, Diversion, The
 Visits, &c. nor of the Morning in demand
 Sleep, lying in Bed, Dressing, or Commu
 the like : These cannot complain Persons
 of want of time, except they im- on Hea
 prudently

any imprudently and unchristianly
 sons waste it. As to *mean Persons*,
 read who have *Business*, or *Trades*, to
 excel follow most part of the working
 reom Days, yet even these, if so seri-
 ed in ous and knowing as above sup-
 each posed, will find leisure for what
 fice they account their greatest, their
 otion first, their continual, and their
 t the last Concern ; supposing them
 well in *health* and in common cir-
 cumstances, They will sit up later,
 quae or rise some part of an hour earlier,
 s ree taking from their Sleep, and watch-
 r will ing to *Prayer* in secret, rather than
 ly for not enjoy God and themselves all
 Souls the day long. The short is, those
 , and who are supposed fit to be *Weekly*
 le of *Communicants*, are either *Persons* of
 have leisure, or such who have *Zeal*
 they enough to *find or make leisure to*
 , and themselves.

of the The last general Qualification I
 person demand, as requisite to *Weekly*
 ing in Communicants, is, That they be
 ng, or Persons no whit strangers to their
 nplain own Hearts ; such who maintain
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 dently

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an orderly course of Devotion, not passing a day without examining Conscience more or less; and accordingly as they find their Estate to be God-wards, applying themselves frequently, at least twice a day, to the Throne of Grace, in some constant sort or method of Prayer: It matters not (I account) whether it be *by conceiving* suitably to their Conditions, usually *new Prayers*, or by some *well-digested, agreeable and comprehensive Form*, wherein *fit Additions* (as occasion requires) may be inserted: Let God, in either way, have the Heart. *Prayer* (say the ancient Doctors) is the *Ascent of the Heart to God*. Let that ascend as it ought, and all is well.

By a *constant method* here I mean, not any such way or order, as never varies (for I have already supposed many particulars in our daily Devotions to vary with our

con-

conditions) nor yet such a course which is never, in case of any Calamity or uncommon Event, at any time interrupted, or wherein no particular Branch is ever omitted ; but what in *all its parts*, is *ordinarily continued with serious and hearty Study of Fresh Vigour or Fervour*. Thus *Anna the Prophetess* (Luke 2. 37.) in her *Widowhood*, for many years, is said *not to have departed from the Temple*, but to *have served God with Fastings and Prayers Night and Day* : Not certainly, that she never came out of the Temple, nor at any season intermitted her Prayers of Fasting ; but she did not ordinarily and on slighty occasions either omit them, or break them off in their seasons ; much less for any time neglect them.

SECT. II.

Of the Preparation of Weekly Communicants.

THose who are *thus qualified*, and *thus pass their common days*, have *little new Work* to do, in order to *preparing* themselves for the *Lord's Supper* : For that, what the Apostle requires to be done by way of Preparation there-
to (1 Cor. II. 28.) is their daily practice. They daily *Examine* themselves, or (as some contend that word is to be interpreted) *try, and approve* themselves, both to God and their own Consciences ; and that as well as to the *Duties* they owe to God, as to their Neighbour and themselves. And in case of *Miscarriage*, even by any smaller

smaller offences (such as a ruffle or disturbance of their temper by a fit of Passion, or some violent Temptation, or the like) much more by any grosser Transgression in word or action, they renew immediately their *Repentance*, and sleep not with the guilt of any Sin upon their Consciences unrepented of. They might therefore daily communicate, had they opportunity for it, and did the business of their Common Calling, and of their other Devotions, well consist with it.

But indeed, *such persons* as these we speak of, *do not usually relapse*, or fall into any *notorious* or *scandalous Sins*, into none of those that *waste Conscience*, or even *disturb its Peace*. Their *Sins* are rather the *Infirmities* of their Nature, and the *Infelicities* of their present State, than provocations of God. And though they daily bewail even these, and groan under them,

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Phil. 3. 13,
11.

endeavouring to get above them, and forgetting (with St. Paul) those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, press forward towards the Mark, for the price of the high Calling in Christ Jesus; yet does this sense of their failings, and grief for their coming short of the Glory of God, no way indispose them for any of the highest Offices of Christian Worship; but rather keep them constantly Humble, Watchful, Devout, full of dependance on Gods Grace, and apprehensive what need they have of the outward means appointed by God, for the conveyance of his Grace, and raising their Souls to him. It creates also in them a longing for those precious advantages, which they reap by all Divine Institutions, and an earnest endeavour to partake all the good they possibly can by them, as often as God vouchsafes them the opportunity and liberty of enjoying them.

But

But notwithstanding such *Habitual preparation*, as long as we live in these *Houses of Clay* (as long as we carry about with us Flesh and Blood, and are unavoidably conversant amongst the men of this World, and amidst the affairs of it too) it may reasonably be esteem'd, that even the *Holiest persons have need to do something for preparing their hearts* to meet God on so Solem an occasion, as being Guests at his Table. Now let us see what *Preparatory Work* it is, which concerns even Persons of the *Character* we have given, as often as the *Weekly Course*, or any other more extraordinary occasion of Communicating calls them thereto.

As to the *Weekly and Ordinary Course of Communicating*, there is an excellent Constitution or Rubrick in the end of the Advertisement concerning the Service of

the Church, annex to the Preface
of our Liturgy, which requires,
 “ That the Curate that ministreth
 “ in every Parish Church or Chap-
 “ pel, being at home, and not
 “ being otherwise reasonably hin-
 “ dred, shall say daily the Mor-
 “ ning and Evening Prayer in the
 “ Parish Church or Chappel
 “ where he ministreth : And shall
 “ cause a Bell to be tolled there-
 “ unto, a convenient time before
 “ he begin, that the People may
 “ come to hear Gods Word, and
 “ to pray with him. *This, God*
be blessed, in Cities and great
Towns, is much observed at present;
in Country Villages indeed it can-
not generally be practised with
convenience to the Peoples La-
bours. But before this Rubrick
was made, there was extant a
Canon (elder than some are aware
of) for the keeping of the Eves of
all such Days, as are appointed by the
Church to be kept Holy : Amongst
which none doubts the Lords Day

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to be one most constant. And on
 such Eves it is expressly required,
 " That the Common Prayer be
 " reverently and publickly read.
 This practice before the *English*
Civil Wars broke the good Order
 of the Church, was constantly
 kept up, even in Country Villages,
 as those who then lived may
 remember. And if this custom
 prevail not now, in all Churches
 wherein Weekly Communions are
 held, yet no doubt it ought to be
 set up. Now it being supposed
 the Curate of every Parish keeps
 this Order; it is most fit that
 every Person, who intends to
 Communicate the next day, should
 be present (except some more than
 ordinary hindrance befall) *at such*
Evening Prayers. By which means
 peoples hearts may be a little
 called off the World, and warned
 what Duties await them the next
 day, and begin in some measure to
 be disposed for them, by thinking
 as much as their condition will

allow, of the state of their *Souls*,
and of their heavenly *Concerns*.

If this cannot be done, by reason of distance from the Parish Church, or otherwise, yet a *secret Prayer* in my Closet (or in some corner, where I can retire by myself) relating to my receiving the *Lords Supper* the next day, must not ordinarily be omitted. Many Forms of Prayer to this purpose (and some brief enough) are extant in those Books, which such, who use themselves to Forms, have by them, and have studied for their own use. They who have no better, or cannot provide better for themselves, may use this which follows, adding it to the end of their usual Devotions.

A Preparatory PRAYER.

THE time now approaches that I am to *shew forth thy Death*, O blessed Saviour, and receive the Sacred Pledges of thy bitter Sufferings and Crucifixion for me. I am not *worthy*, O Lord, to *gather up the Crumbs under thy Table*: yet thou graciously inviteest, and often admittest me as a Guest to it. And thou hast many a time given me there to taste the several blessed Fruits of that Attonement thou madest, by the Sacrifice of thy self *once afford for Sinners*; filling my Heart with *Joy and Peace in believing*, together raising in me Love and Ardent Desires of thee, with resolutions of Zeal and Gratitude, of

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Obedience and Watchfulness, of Heavenly-mindedness, compliance and constant Resignation to thy Holy Will in all things. Good Lord, be pleased now again to meet thy Servant in that Sacred Institution of thine, and deal with him *[or her]* according to thy wanted Loving Kindness. And that thou may'st do so, prepare him *[or her]* to meet thee. Dispose his *[or her]* Heart for the receiving all that Grace and Comfort which thou art constantly ready to bestow.

Forgive and forget, O most merciful Father, all my old Sins, of which I have long ago, and oftentimes repented; but still remember them, and desire afresh to mourn over them before thee. Forgive my later Sins (of ———) which I now repent of, which I am grieved for, which I resolve by thy help to avoid, beware of, and keep

(Here may
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on'd any
particu-
ars.)

keep my self for the future
 from : And vouchsafe hereaf-
 ter to enable me , I beseech
 thee that I may foresee Temp-
 tations, and provide for resist-
 ing them, where I cannot a-
 void them : Make me proof a-
 gainst all the Occasions of
 Sin, and by thy Grace, more
 than Conqueror of my self,
 and of all my Spiritual Ene-
 mies. Let Thy Strength be
 perfected in my Weakness : Seal
 me by thy Spirit to the Day of
 Redemption ; and both grant
 unto me, and ever maintain in
 me, a lively Sense, that by the
 Communion of the Body and
 Blood of my *Lord Jesus*, I have
 received the most Solemn Ear-
 nest of a Blessed Resurrection
 and Everlasting Life, through
 the same my Saviour, *Amen,*
Amen.

After

After this, I suppose no Direction need to be given to the Devout Christian, as to committing himself in usual Form to God's Protection for the Night; and betaking himself cheerfully (or with ease of Mind, without Sollicitude or Scruple) to Natural Repose.

What remains may, by persons so qualify'd as before, well be done in *their Morning Secret Devotions.*

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S E C T. III.

*Of what New Self-Examination
concerns Weekly Communi-
cants; and Prayers suita-
bly.*

WHen the *Lord's-Day Morn-
ing* is now come, being
well, and early up, and engaged in
my *secret Devotion*; I not only, as
usually at other times, *enquire into*
my own *Heart and Temper*, but in
order for my Preparation for the
Lord's-Table; besides those Points
to which I commonly examine my
Conscience on other Days, *put*
these *Two main Questions* to my
self.

I. What

I. What has there pass'd of considerable Moment in any of my *Actions*, or any *Affair* or *Matter* that has befallen me, since my *Last Communicating* ?

II. What is at present the *Inward State* or *Temper* of my *Soul* ?

As to the former of these, what has past ;

I. In my *Outward Life* and *Actions* ? Has any *New Actual Sin* of *Commission*, or any *Notable Omission* proceeded from me ? If so, what *degree of Deliberation* was there in the *Sin* ? or was it perfect *Surprize* ? Was it *Private*, and known only to *God* and my self ? or did it come to the knowledge of others, to give any *Scandal*, or turn to *Ill Example* ? If any such *Publick Miscarriage* (which *God* forbid) should have befallen, I must then abstain from the *Lord's Supper*, till I have

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I have *suitably repented*, and removed such Scandal to the best of my power, and *made satisfaction*. But if I am a person of the Character before given, it is to be hoped I live without all such Offences. Wherefore,

2. I enquire what *has been* since my last communicating, the *Inward State and Temper of my Mind*? Has my Heart been of late any way out of order? Have I been more worldly; more carnal? or more disposed and free to indulge my Pleasure, than becomes a Christian? more luke-warm or slothful in Spirituals? more strait-handed and penurions? more peevish and uneasie to those about me? or the like. These, however *Inward Disorders*, and known haply but between God and my self, are *habitual Evils, or Dispositions to such Habits*.

If

If any thing anew offer it self in any of these kinds, the next *Question* will be, *What has been my Repentance in the Case?* Has the born proportion, or am I penitent in due measure, to my Sin? If not, Repentance is to be renewed according to former Methods which I am supposed well versed in?

Thus as to any change in my self: Now as to any *Considerable Alteration in my Condition, or Circumstances.*

I. As to God's *Providences* towards me: Has any *Remarkable Cross* or Calamity befallen either me or mine? or on the other side any *Signal Blessing*? Certainly Afflictions come not out of the Dust. There is some reason of God's changing his Hand: Either some Sin past, which he punishes; or some near me, and by God fore-
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seen, in some Disposition of me to
 it, and so very likely to overtake
 me, which he would prevent.
 Enquiry must be made by me in
 such Case, and Care taken accord-
 ingly.

In like manner as to Blessings
 received, enquiry must be made;
 for though I can deserve none, yet
 God may take occasion gracious-
 ly to encourage my Diligence, O-
 bedience or any Good Work;
 however, *Blessings require Returns.*
 And *what shall I render unto the*
Lord? Or what have I already
 rendered? Have I not *requited* him
 as the *Israelites* did, with heedles-
 ness of his Benefits, with Sense-
 lessness or Sensuality? These are
 all of them proper and necessary
 Enquiries as to Alterations past,
 since last Communicating.

Deut. 32.6.

But all Persons who would be
 truly Devout and *Worthy Receivers*,
 (that is, *fit and meet*; for worthy
 by

by way of Desert none can be) must *examine* themselves also as to the *Present Temper* of their Mind, whether that be such, as in some measure becomes this Heavenly Feast ? unto which none may enter *without a Wedding-Garment*. Here therefore I examine,

1. Have I at present an *Actual and Lively Sense of God's Infinite Mercy in giving his Son to Redeem me* ? And of my Lord Jesus's *Unparallell'd Love in dying for me, while an Enemy* ? Is there in me any degree of Tender Resentment thereof, or of Thankfulness for it ? At least,

2. Is my *Mind composed* ? my Thoughts, as I may say, at home ? Am I in a calm attentive Temper ? Especially, under a Sense of God's All-seeing Eye ? Or,

3. If

3. If such degrees of these, as I could wish, be wanting in me, yet does *my resolvedness of a Holy Life*, and walking uprightly before God, according to the best of my Knowledge and Power, *continue firm*? Is it my daily Endeavour to maintain a Good Conscience towards God and Man? And am I resolved on that, whatever comes? *As long as this Resolution stands, all is well*; let me seal it at the *Lord's-Table*, as oft as I can; and there imploring Grace, no doubt I shall meet with God's Blessing and Assistance. There remains but One Question more as to my present Temper.

4. Have *I an entire Good Will to Mankind*? Is there no Man living (Friend or Enemy) for whom I cannot heartily pray, and would at this instant pray, if occasion offered, That God would pardon their Sins, and save their Souls?

Upon

Upon an Honest Brief Enquiry
thus into my Soul, if I find things
to stand hopefully with me, I go
down upon my Knees in secret, and
represent all before God, to some
such Effect, or in some such Form
as this.

A P R A Y E R on Sunday
*Morning before the Commu-
nion, according to the Former
Articles of Enquiry when the
Soul is in Good Temper.*

I.

I Am going to thy Table, O Lord
and 'tis the Desire of my Soul
to be filled with a lively sense of
thy surpassing infinite Goodness, of
thy most Marvellous Abundant
Grace and Compassion in Redeem-
ing Mankind (and in it me) by the
Blood

blood of thine Only begotten Son.
 was, O Father, I consider, such
 Redemption as was never other-
 wise heard of: A Redemption from
 under the Power of the Devil, who
 had us Captives at his will, from
 the Slavery of Sin, to which we had
 all our selves; and from *Ever-*
lasting Death, the Wages of Sin. In
 this Estate, when we were all Ene-
 mies, thou didst not *spare thine Only*
Son, but gavest Him to Die, that of
 all those who should believe in Him,
none might perish, but have Everlast-
ing Life. What am I, O Lord?
 that is Human Nature, that thou
 shouldst thus have loved, thus
 compassionate Enemies! O raise
 my Soul, I beseech thee, to such
 apprehension, Persuasion, and At-
 tent Thoughts of this thy Love,
 that I may ever more admire It and
 Thee, and with all my Heart and
 Soul love thee again.

II.

I would compose my Mind,
 and empty my Soul of all
 worldly and ordinary Thoughts;
 but I am not able to bring it to
 that steady recollected Temper
 that I desire! O thou from
 whom alone the Preparations
 of the Heart are, purge my
 Heart from Vanity; (all is Va-
 nity but thy self) command an
 Heavenly and Holy Calm in my
 Rolling Soul. Enable me to
 say truly, *My Heart is fixed*, O
Lord, my Heart is fixed; even
 fixed on thy self: From whom,
 Oh! that it might never
 swerve!

Psal. 57. 7.

III.

I bless thy Name that thou
 didst ever touch my Heart, or
 put any Good Motion into me ;
 that thou hast wrought in me
 any Purpose of Heart to cleave
 unto thee, and to *have respect un-* Ps. 119. 6.
to all thy Commandments ; and a
 desire so to do continually. I
 have sworn, and by thy Grace I
 will perform it, that I will keep
 thy Righteous Judgments. Oh ! Psal. 119
 do thou keep this for ever in the
 Imagination of the Thoughts of my 1 Chron. 29.
 Heart, and prepare and esta- 18.
 blish my Heart unto thy Self.

E

IV.

IV.

And not only *unto thee, O Lord*, but *unto Mankind*, unto the whole Creation, let the Heart of thy Servant stand justly and sweetly affected. *Whatsoever I desire thou shouldest do for me*, that I beseech thee *do for all*: Especially I pray that thou wilt pardon all our Sins, and purge our Hearts, and save our Souls eternally, through thy Mercy in *Christ Jesus*, our Common Lord, *who has by thy Grace tasted Death for every Man* and in whose Words, as well as Name, I farther pray, both for my self and them.

Heb. 2. 9.

Our Father, &c.

But

But the best of Men on Earth being not always in the same Temper, nor even in such Temper as is pleasing and easie to themselves, suppose on *Sunday Morning*, looking into my self, I find some great *Dullness*, or want of any Actual Lively Resentments of God's Goodness upon my Spirit; yea, or any *dispersion of Thoughts* and want of such attentness of Mind to Duty as I desire, and as is needful, yet provided I am conscious to my self, that my *Resolution to a Holy Life* (impartially to all its parts) stands *steddy*, I do not forbear Communicating, the usual Day being come: For it may give Ill Example; if, having been a Constant Communicant, I absent my self; or it may administer occasion to others of thinking it is worse with me, than really it is, and of many other Unhappy Surmises.

Besides, *Dulness*, yea, even *Airiness* and a Roving Temper, may be the *Effect of Bodily Constitution*, or of some Alteration in it for that time; and so may *sooner go over*, than I am aware of; yea, and will do so (by God's Blessing) upon my seeking him in the best order that I can.

Nay, should my very *Resolutions* themselves *seem to waver*, or I be not clear unto my self, whether they are so fix'd as they ought to be; yet supposing upon search I can truly say, there is *no Ill Design* in the World, that I either *propose* to my self, or *consent to*, tho' proposed by others (I thus *regard not any Iniquity in my Heart*: I have no purpose at all of any wicked Action, but am only at present a little shaken from my wonted Clearness, Zeal, and Good Assurance of my self, that through the Grace of
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God I used to have;) even this shall not, for the Reasons just now set down, determine me, or prevail with me to abstain from the *Lord's-Table*: Rather I will resolve to have recourse to my Crucified Saviour, and the Blood of his *Cross*; that I may thence receive Warmth, Courage, Refreshment, Strength and Christian Steadiness. Only, it may be, I will a little alter my *Prayers* before I go to the Communion, according as I find the Circumstances of my present Condition to require.

Now it is supposed that all Persons so qualified (as before) to be frequent or weekly Communicants, have such a portion of Christian Wisdom, as to know what *Prayers* particularly fit their Condition, or agree with their Hearts and Wants.

As also, that they are furnished to vary their Prayers, according to their Conditions : In which last Point (I mean varying, changing, framing or suiting *their Prayers*, according to the Change of their Condition or Inward Temper) much of the present Work of *such Persons Preparations* lies.

There are Excellent Forms of Prayer, fitted for great variety of Tempers, in the End of that Admirable Book, *The Whole Duty of Man* : In the use of which, if all the Parts of the Prayer (for certain of them are somewhat long) do not fit the Soul, those Parts, which do better fit, may be taken, and the Others for the present waved, or used with such little

little Alterations as may make them suitable. And in Bishop *Patrick's Devout Christian Instructed how to Pray, &c.* There is yet greater variety, and of a most Excellent Vein, Divine and Happy.

Which last Prayers having commended, I think my self bound to give an Account of Two or Three Things (amongst others) peculiar to the Prayers in that Book, above any I have met with.

(1.) That there is scarce a Prayer therein (excepting a few Ejaculatory Ones, and Others of very Private Concernment) in which the Devout Christian is not led to a *Renewed Offering, Dedicating and Consecrating*

*crating his Soul (or Soul and Body)
to God.*

(2.) The Prayers most *directly* excite and lead to the Exercise of those very *Christian Graces* or *Holy Affections*, for which they petition. They be-
get and raise in the Heart, that understands them, the very Temper that they ask.

And (3.) They all of them most lively favour of the True *Christian Spirit*, the highest sense of God's Infinite Love and Compassion towards *Lost Mankind* in sending his Only Begotten Son *to seek and to save us*; to *bless us in turning every one of us from our Iniquities*, and making us like himself: And having thus here purified our Souls, to bring them hereafter to that Blessed Vision of himself,

Body)

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himself, of which Sin had made them incapable. This Sense they commonly leave behind them in the Devout Heart. Only I confess, they require a Reader well exercised to Godlines. But such we suppose all Persons qualify'd to be Weekly Communicants, either already to be, or likely very soon to prove.

them
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Notwithstanding, lest either of these never enough commended Books should not be at hand, here is added a Prayer, which, 'tis hoped, may not be unsuitable under some of the lately mentioned Disorders.

5 DE60

E 5

A PRAY-

A PRAYER before the
Communion, when the
Soul is under any of the
aforementioned Disorders.

O Lord God of my Salvation ; who art my only Refuge, let my Condition and Disorder be what it can be. *In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me, and in somewhat a confused Temper, with a very Dull, Dead, and Incomposed Heart, I herecast myself before thee; and such a Heart as I have I desire to offer up unto thee. Besides what I have already confessed of it, I must add, that I am sensible it is very deceitful: But thou,*
O Lord,

O Lord, knowest it, for thou Jerem. 17.
searchest the Hearts and tryest 9, 10.
the Reins of the Children of
Men. It is also a wicked Heart,
 and that it is not desperately
wicked (past all hopes or likeli-
 hood of being made better) I
 owe it only to thee, in whose
Hands are the Hearts of all
Men. My great comfort is,
 that thou canst *turn all Hearts*
as thou pleasest; and I trust
 thou hast long ago begun to
 turn mine unto thy self. If
 I deceive not my own Soul,
 'tis the desire of my Heart to
Repent and be converted. It Acts 3. 19.
 is the Grief of my Heart,
 that it *cleaveth not stedfastly*
 enough unto thee, that
 there is any degree of di-
 stance or averſation at
 any time in me. Good
 Lord, *quench not the Smoak-* Matt. 12
ing Flax : Send forth Judg- 20.
ment unto Victory. Forsake
not

*not the Work of thine own
Hand. Thou madest me
at first, and thou hast since
done much to make me
anew, to make me thine :
O perfect thy Good Work
in me, and upon me.
Search me now, O Lord,
and know my Heart : Try
me, and know my Thoughts ;
and see if there be any
Wicked Way in me ; and not
only turn me utterly from
it, but lead me in the
Way Everlasting ; in the
Unchangeable Ways of Righ-
teousness, Sincerity, and
Truth.*

Psal. 139.

23, 24.

5 DE60

H. O

II.

O Blessed Jesus, who didst
 once *taste Death* for my Sins,
 but art now *highly exalted*;
 and hast received a name which is Phil. 2. 9.
above every name, that to thee
every knee should bow, of things
in Heaven, and things on Earth,
and things under the Earth; and
that every tongue should confess
thee Lord and King: In obedi-
 ence to thy dying Command, I
 resolve to *shew forth thy Death,*
 on this thy Day, in the manner
 thou hast appointed; to testify
 thereby to the World of Angels
 and Men, my entire dependance
 upon the Blood of thy Cross,
 for the Remission of my Sins,
 my hearty consent, and desire
 that thou shouldest Rule over
 me and in me, and my hope
 that

Joh. 6. 40.

Heb. 6. 18.

that thou wilt raise me again at the last Day, and give me everlasting Life. I have fled for refuge, to this hope set before me. Thou, O Lord Jesus, art my hope. Thou who once didst bear my Sins upon the Cross; Thou who dyedst for me, and now livest for ever, sitting at the Right Hand of the Father, to make Intercession for me, Thou art my hope; Reject me not, O Lord. *I come unto thee,* and desire to come with all my Heart: *Cast me not out,* I beseech thee; rather receive me as thine, and grant I may receive thee also. Lord, as I am able, I open my Heart, O come and dwell here. And *out of thy fulness let me partake, even grace for grace.*

III.

Never was there such love as thine; that thou shouldst come into the World to Die for me!

me! That thou shouldest appoint lasting Pledges of thy Death and Passion! That thou shouldest provide that I be made Partaker of that very Sacrifice of thy Self! O what unconceivable Bowels of Mercy, Grace and Goodness! Good Lord fill me with a lively sense of this thine unparallel'd love, and let that sense beget in me love towards thee again, ardent in some measure as thine towards me: Such a love as may make me cheerful to do thy Will, and studious in all things to please thee: Such a love which may enlarge my Heart, and raise it above all things that the World admires; such a love that may never be satisfied with any thing below thy self, and may still be growing in fervour, till I shall behold thee, not under Signs or || Symbols, as now, but clearly and intimately, face to face, in that glori-

*|| That is
Tokens or
Pledges.*

Hebrews.
2: 17. and
8: 1.

glorious Kingdom, where thou
now *sittest at the Right Hand of*
the Father, a merciful and faith-
ful High Priest, having made
Reconciliation by thy Blood.

LV.

Heb. 2: 18.

Luk. 22.
31.

Heb. 7: 25.

Till that blessed Day, O
thou who hast thy self *suffered,*
being tempted, succour me under
all my Temptations. Enligh-
ten me in this my dark Estate;
and however Satan may be per-
mitted to *sift me,* let not my
faith fail. Help and Heal all
my Infirmities, and *save me to*
the uttermost ; for thou art able
so to do.

V.

O thou who art *entred with-*
in the Vail, into the true *Holy*
of Holies, which is above, and
ever livest to make intercession for
thine

thine according to the Will of God; forasmuch as a clean thing cannot come out of an unclean, Rev. 83.
 present, I pray thee, and offer up these my Prayers, with thy much Incense, unto him thy Father. I further pray, O Lord, as thou hast taught me,

Our Father, &c.

These Preparations being thus over, and my Sunday Morning Secret Devotions being concluded, I appear in the Family as usual: And if I be Master or Mistress of it, I see that as many of my Family, as may well be spared from necessary Occasions at Home, (which Occasions on Sundays should not be multiplied if avoidable) be ready to attend me to the Church. And after some short Prayers with them, as usual every Lord's Day, we go comfortably together to the *House of God*.

Both

Both in my House, from the time of my coming out of my Closet, and in my passage to Church, though I am not commonly pensive, nor behave myself any way dejectedly, melancholily, or morosely; yet I avoid all vain, light, trifling and worldly Discourse, as near as I can. I talk not merrily my self, nor willingly hear others now so talking. A man may maintain an holy chearfulness without Laughter, or endeavouring to make the Company laugh: And we never read that our *Lord Jesus* laughed all his days; which consideration may well restrain me from it, if not this whole day, yet for this part of it. And I not only avoid foolish merriment or airiness, but any serious *business of common Nature*; any object whatsoever, which may take my mind off from my designed Devotions. If against my will, and by Surprise, any thing come

come in my way relating to outward and worldly Concerns, I take care, as far as I am able, not to be put out of temper, or any wise disordered or ruffled by it.

Being *entred the Church*, my behaviour is much the same, as at other times in the same place : For I never allow my self to gaze or prate, or be impertinently *whispering* with, and *smiling* upon all my Acquaintances I meet in the Church. That is a place set apart and consecrate to God's Worship : I esteem him therefore to have a *Property* not only *to it*, but *to all that's in it*, to all my thoughts, words and actions, when I am once entred into it. Wherefore, if I have not the faculty of *Steady Thinking*, I have provided some small *Pocket-Book* on some pious and convenient Subject, which I may read till the Service begin : Or else I go on in an ordinary course of *reading my Bible*, which

I commonly carry to Church with me (in whole or in part) Or, lastly, I run over beforehand the *Psalms*; or look into, and consider the *Epistle or Gospel*, or *Lessons* for the day, that I may be the better able to understand them, and have them more deeply imprinted on my Heart and Memory when they come Solemnly to be read by the Minister.

But the *Service* being once begun, as near as I can, I suffer not my *Thought* to stray at all from it: I joyn in every part of it, according as the Church requires; vocally when my Voice is required, and with my Mind and hearty Consent in the rest; and finally by a constant attention to the *Holy Scripture* Read and Preached. And having so, as above set down, proceed through the whole, I doubt not but that I am prepared for the Communion-Service, so that with a clear Heart and Holy Hunger I

approach my Lord's Table, at which now there is nothing new, or what I am not well versed in.

I take care therefore, that no part of that Service escape either my Attention or Consent. I secretly in my Heart *reflect* on my Sins against *each Command*, when I hear the Command pronounced. I afterwards, as the Church directs, *beg Pardon* for what is *past*, and *Grace* for better Observance of each for the *time to come*. I am very hearty in the *General Confession*, Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. and I receive with Devotion, and humble dependance on God for ratifying it, *the Absolution* following. In a word, as far as I am able, I suffer not any part of the *Office* to pass without *putting my Heart into it*. And having so Communicated, I return home with the same Pious Cheerfulness and Easiness with which I came out, not doubting but God has accepted me. Being
come

come home, I retire some few minutes to my Closet or Chamber, if with possible convenience I can : I am not a Stranger there as to the Addresses I have to make to God. I soon come forth to the Family, and with them eat my Meat with gladness and singleness of Heart. Thus the Primitive Christians spent (at least) each Lord's Day ; and thus do I desire to do, till I be taken to them in the Everlasting Sabbathism, which remains for the Faithful.

Lord Jesus say, Amen.

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